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**FORMER SENIOR DEA OFFICIAL SENTENCED TO 30 MONTHS IN U.S.
PRISON FOR EMBEZZLEMENT, MISUSE OF AGENCY RESOURCES**

DAVID N. KELLEY, the United States Attorney for the Southern District of New York, announced that KEVIN M. TAMEZ, formerly the Associate Special Agent in Charge of the New York Division of the Drug Enforcement Administration ("DEA"), was sentenced today in Manhattan federal court by United States District Judge DENNY CHIN today to 30 months in prison for embezzlement and related charges.

According to the Indictment and Superseding Information, TAMEZ embezzled approximately \$138,488 from the DEA and misused DEA personnel and resources to conduct work for a private investigations firm called MPM Group, Inc. ("MPM"), for which TAMEZ worked.

According to the Indictment and Superseding Information, TAMEZ used the embezzled money to pay various personal expenses, including payment of his personal credit card bills, the lease of a Chevy Suburban, the purchase of men's suits

and the repair of a hot tub at his residence.

According to the Indictment and Superseding Information, clients of MPM included private individuals, law firms and private companies. Among other things, TAMEZ ordered DEA agents to conduct ostensibly legitimate investigative work, which, instead, related to MPM. Such work included physical surveillances and "trash runs" -- an investigative technique commonly used by law enforcement agents to search the trash of targets to develop leads as to the target's activities or the target's associates -- on various individuals. TAMEZ explained to the agents that the surveillances and "trash runs" were for law enforcement purposes.

Additionally, as alleged in the Indictment and Superseding Information, TAMEZ directed DEA personnel to run criminal history and motor vehicle checks on MPM subjects, using DEA's computers. As alleged in the Indictment and Superseding Information, TAMEZ conducted MPM's business without authorization from DEA, using a variety of aliases, including "Kenneth P. Thomas," "James Fox," "Jim Fox," "John Bettinger" and "John DiGravio," among others.

According to the Indictment and the Superseding Information, as Associate SAC, TAMEZ was responsible for, among other things, the financial management of the New York Division.

At sentencing, Judge CHIN stated that TAMEZ was "doubly dishonest" because not only did he steal money from the

Government, but he also involved "numerous innocent agents who could not say 'no'" to an Associate SAC. Judge CHIN also ordered TAMEZ to pay restitution to the DEA in the amount of \$154,959.24.

TAMEZ, 51, lives in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey.

Assistant United States Attorney SERENE K. NAKANO is in charge of the prosecution.

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